

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars.

1. In the claims

Claim 30 is amended to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 31. Claim 31 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Allowance of amended claim 30 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 32 is amended to recite the subject matter of claim 30 prior to its current amendment. Since the subject matter of claim 32 is considered allowable, allowance of amended claim 32 is respectfully requested.

Claim 33 is made dependent from claim 39 due to the amendment of claim 30 from which it previously depended from.

Claim 34 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Both claims 36 and 37 are amended to recite that the at least one resilient seal element is "secured to" the liner sleeve body, and that the at least one resilient seal element has a proximal end portion that is slidable within the at least one recessed portion. Support for this amendatory language is clearly found in Figs. 17-20 and their corresponding description in the specification on pages 12 and 13.

Lastly, claim 39 is amended to recite that the reinforcement material is discrete and located within the thickness of the liner sleeve body portion. Support for this amendment is likewise found in Figs. 17-20 and their corresponding description in the specification on pages 12 and 13.

Entry of the amendment to the claims is respectfully requested in the next Office communication.

2. Rejection of claims 30, 33, 34, 36 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 01/54631 (Caspers)

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the basis that in view of the amendments to claims 30, 33, 36 and 39, the Caspers document fails to teach each and every limitation required by these claims. Therefore, these claims are not anticipated by the Caspers document.

Turning to claim 30, this claim now includes the allowable subject matter of claim 31. The Caspers document fails to disclose or suggest this allowable subject matter, as clearly acknowledged in the Office action.

Claim 34 is cancelled and therefore its rejection is moot.

Next, claim 36 specifies that the at least one resilient seal element is both secured to the liner sleeve body and has an end portion slidable within the at least one recessed portion of the liner sleeve body. Nowhere in the Caspers document is there a resilient seal element that is described in the manner of the currently recited seal element of claim 36. The seal 140 of the Caspers document is plainly illustrated and described as being stationary without any portions that are slidable.

Lastly claim 39, from which claim 33 now depends, is amended to recite that the reinforcement material is discrete and located within the thickness of the liner sleeve body portion. As is clear from observing Figs. 17 and 18 of the Caspers document, the seal 140 is located on the exterior surface of the suspension sleeve 86. The seal 140 is also described as being made from the same material as the sleeve or as being an extension of the liner (page 22, first two full

paragraphs). There is simply no description of the seal as being “discrete” as required in claim 39.

In addition, the Caspers document cannot be construed to read that the seal would possibly be located anywhere but on the exterior of the suspension sleeve since the seal is clearly shown as protruding outwardly from the line, and would not sealingly engage the suspension sleeve 86 if constructed otherwise, as required in the description on page 22, lines 6-11. Therefore, the seal of the Caspers document cannot be both a seal and a reinforcement material of the type required by claim 39 since the reinforcement material required of claim 39 is described as being discrete and located within the thickness of the liner such that it reinforces a recessed portion of the liner.

In view of these observations, it is respectfully submitted that the Caspers document does not teach each and every element required in claims 30, 33, 36 and 39. Therefore, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

3. Rejection of claims 34, 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 03/024370 A1 (Carstens - corresponding to U.S. patent application publication 2004/0236434 A1)

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the basis that the Carstens document fails to disclose each and every feature required by claims 36 and 37. Accordingly, the subject matter of these claims is not anticipated by the Carstens document.

For the sake of simplicity, the applicant will refer to the English language description provided in the ‘434 publication.

Claim 34 is cancelled and therefore its rejection is moot.

As indicated above, both claims 36 and 37 are currently amended to recite that the at least one resilient seal element is both secured to the liner sleeve body and has an end portion slidable within the at least one recessed portion of the liner sleeve body. The Carstens document simply fails to disclose a resilient seal element of the type required by both claims 36 and 37.

In observing Fig. 4, the Carstens document describes band 18 as having two rim strips 19 and 21 that are bonded to the outer wall 32 of the liner 30 (paragraph [0070]). Since both the rim strips 19 and 21 are bonded to the liner 30, neither can be construed as the resilient seal element of claims 36 and 37. Moreover, the ring 34 is not secured to the liner 30, and instead is suspended from the liner 30 by the band 18. Hence, the ring 34 cannot also be construed as the resilient seal element required by both claims 36 and 37.

Since neither the band 18 nor the ring 34 of the Carstens document have the features of the resilient seal element in claims 36 and 37, it is kindly asserted that the Carstens document does not disclose each and every limitation required by pending claims 36 and 37. Therefore, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

4. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the pending claims be allowed and the application passed to issue.

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Examiner: David H. Willse
Art Unit: 3738

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the applicants' attorney, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin J. Cassell", written in a cursive style.

Date: October 25, 2005

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